

REMARKS

Claims 1-11 are now pending in the application. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejection in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

DRAWINGS

The drawings stand objected to for certain informalities. Applicants have attached a revised drawing for the Examiner's approval. In the "Replacement Sheet", numeral 18 has been deleted. The numeral 8 on the left-hand side of the figure has also been deleted. Lastly, all reference to numeral 10 in the specification has been deleted since this numeral is absent from the drawing. Favorable consideration of this "Replacement Sheet" is respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1 and 3-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Leibach (U.S. Pat. No. 6,250,615) in view of Fukahori et al (U.S. Pat. No. 4,761,925). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner alleges that Leibach teaches a device that closely resembles the claimed hydro-mount, but does not teach a protective coating. Notwithstanding, the Examiner alleges that Fukahori teaches a protective coating and, therefore, it would have been obvious to apply a protective coating to the rubber spring element of Leibach for increased resistance to cracking and/or protection from the environment. Applicants,

however, respectfully assert that there is no suggestion or motivation to combine the teachings of Leibach with the teachings of Fukahori.

More specifically, the claimed invention is directed to a hyrdo-mount that is generally used as an engine mount to suppress vibrations of the engine during operation. In this regard, a spring element is used that encloses a work space that is filled with a damping liquid. Such a spring element is generally formed of material such as natural rubber or EPDM rubber. During operation of the engine, however, the spring element is subjected to high temperatures which can shorten the useful life of the spring element because materials such as natural rubber and EPDM are only resistant to temperatures of about 150°C while the spring element can be subjected to temperatures in excess of 200°C. As such, the claimed invention utilizes a spring element that is resistant to these high temperatures.

Although the claimed invention utilizes a spring element that is resistant to high temperatures, the high temperature resistant materials may not be resistant to the damping fluid contained in the work space enclosed by the spring element. More particularly, the high temperature resistant materials may allow the damping fluid to penetrate into and diffuse through the spring element. This is undesirable.

To remedy this problem, the claimed invention has been developed to include a protective layer that is provided on an inner surface of the spring element that encloses the work space filled with the damping fluid. The claimed protective layer comprises a material that is resistant and impervious to the damping liquid. By including the claimed protective layer, the claimed invention solves the problem of a short lifespan for the spring element because it is formed of a high temperature resistant material that can withstand

the high temperature in an engine compartment, and also solves the problem of the spring element being susceptible to diffusion of the damping fluid. Neither Leibach nor Fukahori contain any suggestion or motivation to solve either of these problems.

More specifically, Leibach merely teaches a rubber isolator 3 that is used for a hydro-mount 100. Leibach, however, is completely silent with respect to any problems that may occur due to high temperature degradation of the isolator 3 or diffusion of the damping fluid. With respect to Fukahori, Fukahori merely teaches an anti-seismic rubber bearing that is exposed to the atmosphere at all times. Since the anti-seismic rubber bearing is exposed to the atmosphere at all times, Fukahori also teaches that bearing should be covered with a special rubber that has outstanding weather resistance. The teaching of a rubber coating that has outstanding weather resistance, however, falls short of a protective layer that is resistant and impervious to a damping fluid, as claimed. Further, Applicants respectfully assert that one skilled in the art of hydro-mounts would not be motivated to look to the teachings of Fukahori because Fukahori is directed to a rubber bearing for supporting buildings that are susceptible to earthquakes. Please see Fukahori at column 1, lines 22-30. As such, Fukahori is completely non-analogous art.

Since Fukahori is completely non-analogous art and contains no suggestion that its rubber coating would be useful in providing resistance and imperviousness to a damping fluid, and Leibach contains no teaching or suggestion that temperature resistance and damping fluid resistance are problems in the art of hydro-mounts, Applicants respectfully assert that the claimed hydro-mount would not have been obvious in view of Leibach, Fukahori, or any combination thereof.

Claim 2 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Leibach in view of Fukahori et al as applied to claim 1, above, and further in view of Vernier (U.S. Pat. No. 3,874,646). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 2 is dependent on independent claim 1, addressed above. Claim 2 is not obvious for at least the same reasons.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

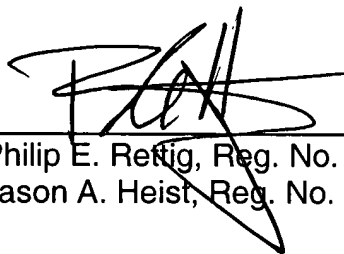
CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: JAN. 7, 2005

By: _____


Philip E. Rettig, Reg. No. 34,000
Jason A. Heist, Reg. No. 51,797

HARNESS, DICKEY & PIERCE, P.L.C.
P.O. Box 828
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48303
(248) 641-1600

PER/JAH

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached "Replacement Sheet" includes changes to Figure 1. The attached "Replacement Sheet," which includes Figure 1, replaces the original sheet including Figure 1.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet